

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Attached hereto is one (1) Replacement Drawing Sheet that complies with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.84. The Replacement Drawing Sheet incorporates the following drawing changes:

In Fig. 3, the decision step “Is the Printing end data received?” has been indicated by reference numeral --110--;

The decision step “Has any warning made?” has been indicated by reference numeral --111--; and

The execution step “Transfer the current time data” has been indicated by reference numeral --112--.

It is respectfully requested that the Replacement Drawing Sheet be approved and made a part of the record of the above-identified application.

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the present application. New claims 19 and 20 have been added.

Drawings

Minor changes have been made to Fig. 3, so that it is consistent with the statements in the specification.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to approve and enter the foregoing drawing changes.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hori (USP 5,847,726) in view of Ogawa (JP 2000-076035A). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

One of the objects of the present invention resides in improvement of the recovery treatment of an ink-jet head in an ink-jet printer system provided with a common ink-jet printer shared by a multiple number of host machines. - (A)

In a conventional art, even if each host machine may be capable of memorizing as to when the ink-jet printer has been used, one host machine could not grasp a usage history of the printer stored in another host machine. - (B)

In order to solve this problem, in the claimed invention of the present application, when a host machine makes a print request to an ink-jet printer, the ink-jet printer transfers a

completion instant (of the last printing operation) to the host machine before execution of printing. - (C)

As a prerequisite to realize the above operation of the present invention, the ink-jet printer memorizes the completion time instant (of the last printing operation). - (D)

First of all, Applicants respectfully the art disclosed by Hori is totally different from that of the present invention, and does not even recognize the problem (described in paragraph (B)) that the present invention tries to solve.

This is clear from the fact that Hori does not disclose or suggest providing an ink-jet printer that memorizes the completion time instant (of the last printing operation) (described in paragraph (D)).

Moreover, Hori does not disclose or suggest the feature of the present invention described in paragraph (D) because the Examiner states, in the Office Action (see page 2, last two lines through page 3, first line of the Office Action), that “wherein each machine . . . includes print control means . . . for reading out the completion time instant . . . from the *host memory 34B*”

The Examiner relies on the Ogawa reference and alleges that it discloses the feature of storing completion time instant of a last printing operation in an ink-jet printer (described in paragraph (D)).

Arguably, Ogawa may be somewhat similar to the feature of the present invention described in paragraph (D) in that the completion time of a print job is memorized when the print job is performed. However, it is not clear as to whether, after the printing job is

completed, the memorized completion time instant (of the last printing operation) is maintained or not even when new printing job is to be performed.

It appears that, in Ogawa, the completion time of the present print job may be memorized, but the completion time of the previous print job is not memorized.

Further, Ogawa does not belong to the art described in paragraph (A) since one of the characteristic features of claim 1 is different from Ogawa.

Yet further, even though the disclosure of Ogawa may arguably be somewhat similar to the feature described in paragraph (D), there is no disclosure in Ogawa as to the feature described in paragraph (C). That is to say, Ogawa discloses that the printer transmits the completion time information to the host machine not by “a print request,” but by “a request for obtaining a print-job status.”

Furthermore, it is not clear whether Ogawa would have a prerequisite to send back a complete time instance to a host machine before executing printing process. This is because Ogawa does not belong to the category described in paragraph (A).

Further, in Ogawa, the feature similar to that described in paragraph (D) is not used for the purpose of solving the problem described in paragraph (C).

As described above, both Hori and Ogawa do not belong to the same art described in paragraph (A), hence there is no recognition of the problems described in paragraph (B), and thus there is not disclosure as to the solution to the problem as described in paragraph (C). Hence there is no motivation to combine the references. Further, Ogawa does not disclose or suggest the feature described in paragraph (D). Accordingly, even assuming that the cited

reference can be combined, which Applicants do not admit, the combination would not render the present invention obvious.

Claims 2-18, variously dependent on claim 1, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 1.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

New Claims

Claims 19 and 20, dependent on claim 1, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 1.

A favorable determination by the Examiner and allowance of these claims is earnestly solicited.

Conclusion

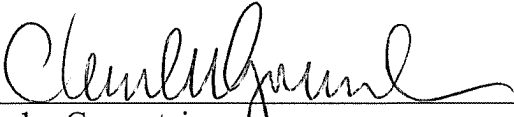
Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and objections, and allowance of the pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Maki Hatsumi (#40,417) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment(s): One (1) Replacement Drawing Sheet - Fig 3